The Capilla Real in Córdoba. Transcultural Exchange in Medieval Iberia

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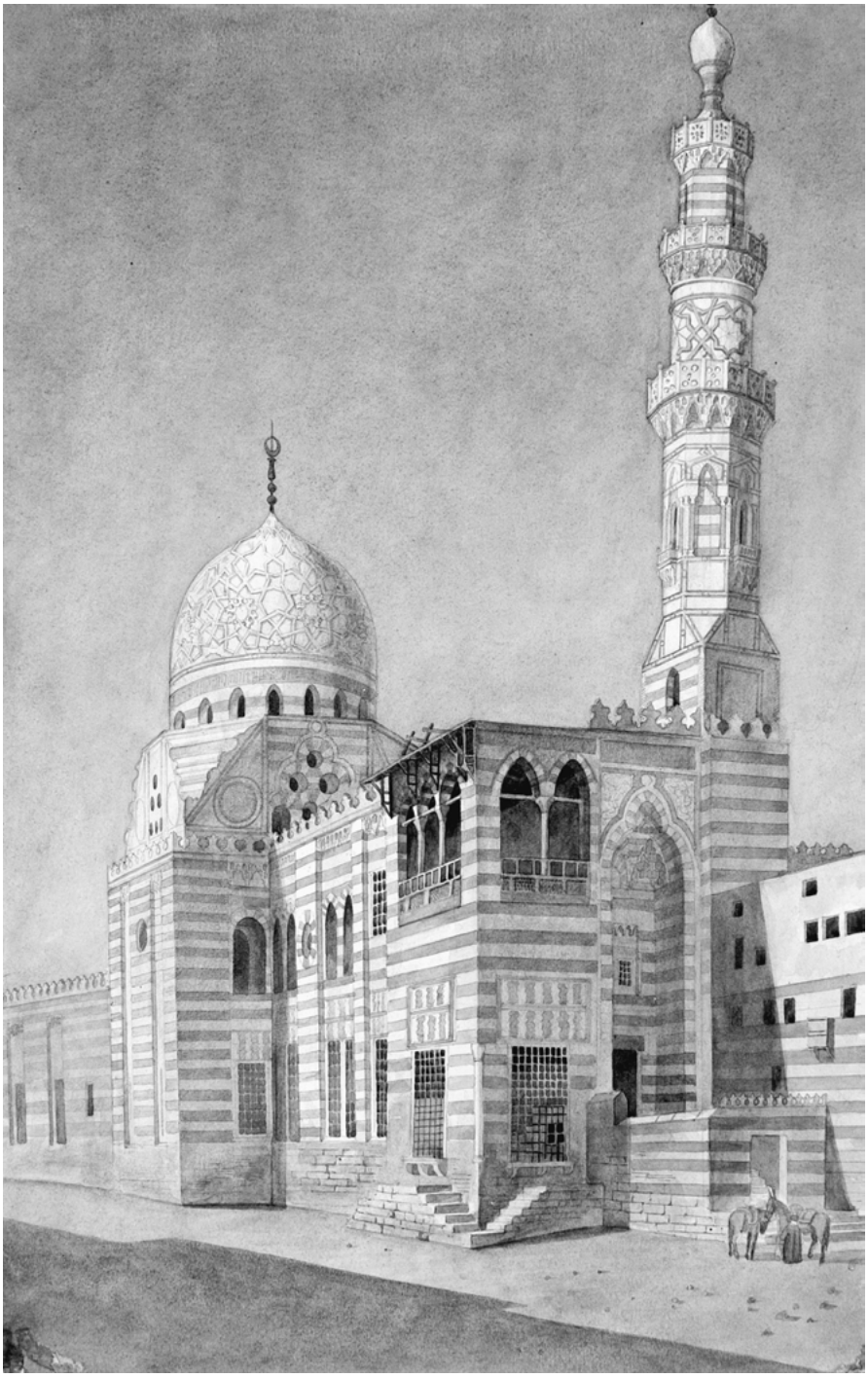
Tomb – Memory – Space



TOMB – MEMORY – SPACE

Concepts of Representation in Premodern Christian and Islamic Art

Edited by Francine Giese, Anna Pawlak and Markus Thome

DE GRUYTER

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Francine Giese

THE CAPILLA REAL IN CÓRDOBA

Transcultural Exchange in Medieval Iberia*

Introduction

This essay presents preliminary results of the research project "Mudejarismo and Moorish Revival in Europe", funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and based at the University of Zurich.[1] By analyzing the complex and multi-faceted phenomena of cross-cultural appropriation and hybridization during the Iberian Middle Ages and the global 19th century, the project contributes to the current debates on artistic transfer, inclusion or exclusion of diverse cultural legacies, and identity building in multi-ethnical and multi-religious societies. At the same time, art historical concepts such as *Mudéjar Art* or the problematic demarcation between Islamic, Christian, and Jewish cultural spheres in the Iberian Peninsula are questioned. Within this context, the royal burial chapel in the mosque-cathedral of Córdoba is a major reference to show how complex art historical documentation and systematization can be rendered in contact zones. In this specific case, it is the cultural entanglement between al-Andalus on the one side and the Crown of Castile and León on the other, which complicates the analysis of transcultural phenomena in the Iberian Peninsula. While the Capilla Real in Córdoba follows the tradition of Castile and León's royal burial chapels, regarding its location and layout, the interior decoration points into a completely different direction and attests artistic exchanges between the Christian and Islamic courts of Seville and Granada.

* My thanks go to Christian Schweizer and Ariane Varela Braga for the translation and proofreading of the text.

1 For an overview on the mentioned project and its various sub-projects, see Francine Giese and Ariane Varela Braga (eds.), Resplendence of al-Andalus. Exchange and Transfer Processes in Mudéjar and Neo-Moorish Architecture, in: *Asiatische Studien* 70.4 (2016), pp. 1307–1353.

The Iberian Peninsula – a Permeable World

Even though the artistic exchange between al-Andalus and the Christian territories of the North has been in the center of medieval studies in Spain since the 19th century,[2] it only quite recently entered the limelight of global (art) history, which focuses especially on zones of contact and the problems caused by their cultural and artistic entanglement.[3] The cultural interaction witnessed within the Iberian Peninsula has been defined by Thomas Glick and Oriol Pi-Sunyer in their much-noticed contribution of 1969 as a process of *acculturation* which is founded on the "permeability" of cultures. Further on, the mentioned authors identified the exposure to different cultural spheres as the "prerequisite for borrowing".[4]

Taking into consideration the multiple cultural ties of medieval Iberia, the underlying exchange processes, closely studied by Gerogiorgakis, Scheel and Schorkowitz in their 2011 publication, resulted in a multi-directional flow of knowledge, language, and artistic forms.[5] As has been argued by Andreas Speer in his introduction to the 2006 publication *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, knowledge – unlike information – does not only consist of a mere accumulation of data, but also of their correlation and attribution.[6] This observation is also true in the field of artistic production, where the borrowed forms must be understood in their original context, in order to successfully integrate and re-contextualise them in their new surroundings. The comprehensive medieval attitude, which finds itself reflected in Wolfgang Welsch's concept of *transculturality*,[7] sharply differs from the appropriation process witnessed in the 19th century, where the Islamic heritage of al-Andalus has been detached from its original meaning. What Peter Burke described in his 2009 publication *Cultural Hybridity* as "the fashion for the foreign"

2 Jocelyn Nigel Hillgarth, Spanish Historiography and Iberian Reality, in: *History and Theory* 24,1 (1985), pp. 23–43; Maya Soifer, Beyond convivencia. Critical reflections on the historiography of interfaith relations in Christian Spain, in: *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 1,1 (2009), pp. 19–35. For further reading, see *El Legado de Al-Andalus. El arte andalusí en los reinos de León y Castilia durante la Edad Media. Simposio Internacional*, Valladolid: Fundación del Patrimonio Histórico de Castilla y León, 2007; Jerrilynn D. Dodds et al., *The Arts of Intimacy. Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008.

3 See for instance Avinoam Shalem, Dangerous Claims. On the 'Othering' of Islamic Art History and How It Operates within Global Art History, in: *Kritische Berichte. Zeitschrift für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften* 40,2 (2012), pp. 69–86.

4 Thomas F. Glick/Oriol Pi-Sunyer, Acculturation as an Explanatory Concept in Spanish History, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11,2 (1969), esp. pp. 138–140.

5 Stamatios Georgiorakis et al., Kulturtransfer vergleichend betrachtet, in: Michael Borgolte et al. (eds.), *Integration und Desintegration der Kulturen im europäischen Mittelalter*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2011, esp. pp. 403–404.

6 Andreas Speer, Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter, in: Andreas Speer and Lydia Wegener (eds.), *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006, p. XV.

7 Wolfgang Welsch, Transculturality. The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today, in: Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (eds.), *Spaces of Culture. City, Nation, World*, London: Sage Publishing, 1999, pp. 194–213.

was the response of the Castilian Crown to the imports from Nasrid Granada, as will be shown in the following pages.[8]

Reading the Entangled History of Córdoba's Royal Chapel

One of the most interesting monuments for illustrating the cultural entanglement between al-Andalus and the Crown of Castile and León is the former Umayyad Mosque of Córdoba, built between AH 169–170/AD 785–787 by ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān I (r. AH 138-172/AD 756–788),[9] and gradually enlarged to become one of the biggest mosques of the medieval Islamic world.

After the reconquest of the city by Fernando III (r. 1217–1252) in 1236, the Cordobese mosque was converted into a Christian cathedral, causing a series of modifications, including the construction of a royal burial chapel known as *Capilla de San Clemente* – built by Alfonso X (r. 1252–1284) between 1258 and 1260 in the eastward extension of the prayer hall dating to AH 377/AD 987–988.[10] Spanning four naves in breadth and four bays in depth, Alfonso's burial site would remain the biggest of all chapels founded in the Cordobese cathedral. The Castilian-Leonese king originally planned to be buried here, but changed many times his mind until his death in 1284, when he finally found eternal rest in the cathedral of Seville.[11] His Cordobese burial chapel was therefore conveyed to Don Gonzalo Iváñez Dovinal de Aguilar on 4 April 1262 by Alfonso's personal behest.

The second extension of the Córdoba prayer hall, executed between AH 351–360/361/AD 962–971 under Umayyad caliph al-Ḥakam II (r. AH 350-366/AD 961–976), became the liturgical centerstage of the newly sanctified cathedral (Figs. 1 and 2).[12] Even though the Christian presbytery and nave were not located in the middle of the former Islamic prayer hall, but in its Southwest corner, this part of the mosque was and still is the most important and resplendent.[13] It is here that the prayer niche is situated, adorned by a rich mosaic decor and flanked by two similarly designed façades, all three being located within the so-called *maqsura*. This enclosed compartment in front of the prayer niche and pulpit, distinguished by three star-shaped rib vaults, is the culmination point of the broader and

8 Peter Burke, *Cultural Hybridity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009, pp. 79–82. In the same context, Burke emphasises, that "cultural 'harmony', or at any rate appropriation, was apparently combined with social disharmony", as was the case in medieval Iberia with its religious and ethnically motivated purges, see Raimund Allebrand (ed.), *Terror oder Toleranz? Spanien und der Islam*, Bad Honnef: Horlemann, 2004.

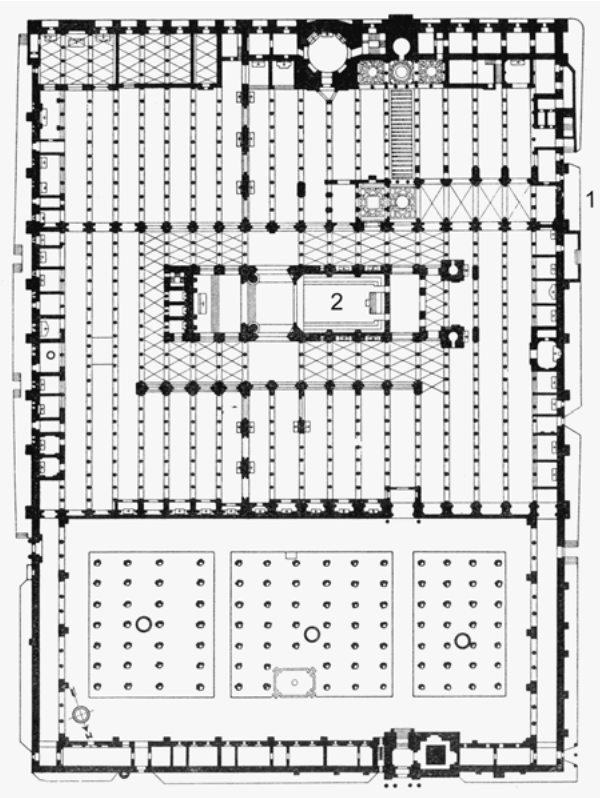
9 Manuel Nieto Cumplido, *La Catedral de Córdoba*, 2nd edition, Córdoba: Obra Social y Cultural Caja Sur, 2007, pp. 57–62.

10 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), pp. 366–367, 379–381.

11 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), pp. 366–367, 379–381. Fernando Gutiérrez Baños, *Las empresas artísticas de Sancho IV el Bravo*, Burgos: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997, pp. 150–151.

12 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), pp. 181–275.

13 Heather Ecker, The Great Mosque of Córdoba in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in: *Muqarnas* 20 (2003), p. 120.



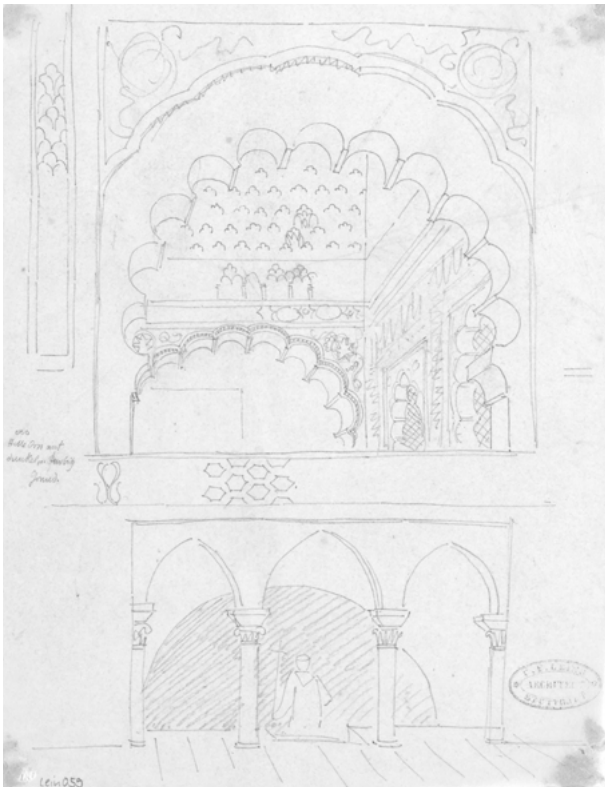
1 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, floorplan with indication of 13th-century presbytery and nave (1) and the monumental 16th-century presbytery and choir (2).

higher middle nave. A fourth rib vault together with a transversal arcade, was constructed in front of the existing three to demarcate this newly built area from the two precedent phases.[14]

This first compartment in the middle nave of al-Ḥakam's prayer hall extension was known by the 17th century as *Capilla de Nuestra Señora de Villaviciosa*. After 1236, it was turned into a presbytery, converting the adjacent bays towards the *Puerta del Espiritu Santo* in the West into the nave of the Cordobese cathedral,[15] where the holy mass was celebrated until the consecration of the second and much more monumental nave in 1607 (Figs. 1 and 2).[16]

A second royal burial chapel neighbors the Capilla de Villaviciosa to the East. Originally, it was connected to the presbytery by two narrow passageways. This younger Capilla Real also known as Capilla de San Fernando, on which I will subsequently elaborate more

14 For further reading, see Francine Giese, *Bauen und Erhalten in al-Andalus. Bau- und Erhaltungsgeschichte der Moschee-Kathedrale von Córdoba*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2016, pp. 21–184.
15 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), pp. 449–457.
16 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), pp. 499–565.



2 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, exterior view by Christian Friedrich von Leins, 1853/1854.

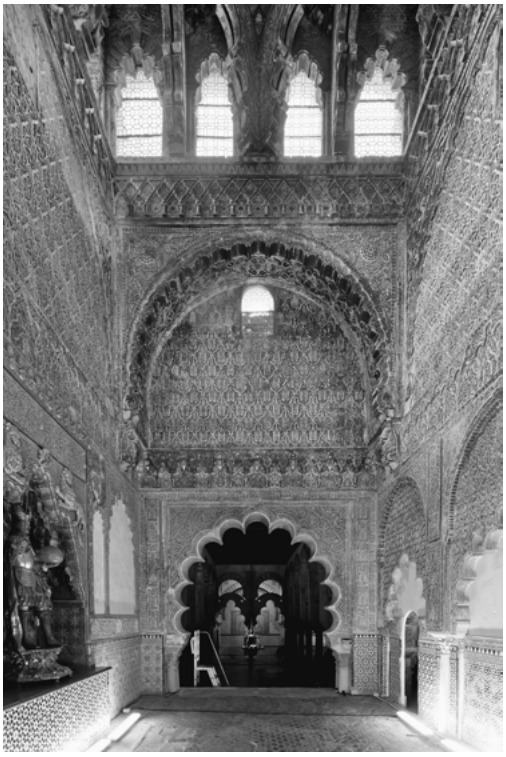
in depth, is the cause of much controversy until the present day – especially concerning its origin, architectural structure and dating of its sumptuous decor.[17]

Built as a two-storey complex (Fig. 2), the floor of the lower vaulted chamber or crypt stands below the level of the surrounding mosque groundfloor, while the upper chamber, is instead situated two meters above floor level and with a total height of 17 m on a base of 8.92 × 5.59 m nearly twice as high than long.[18] Two deep polylobed arches starting from lion consoles at the chapel's Northern and Southern side mark the transition from the rectangular floor plan to the nearly quadratic vault base (Fig. 3, Plate XII).[19] Above this line

17 Alicia Carillo Calderero, La Capilla Real de la catedral de Córdoba. Un origen califal? Reflexiones y defensa de su origen cristiano, in: *Proceedings of the XI Simposio Internacional de Mudejarismo from September 18–20 2008*, Teruel: Instituto de Estudios Turolenses, Centro de Estudios Mudéjares, 2009, pp. 451–463. For an overview on the 19th-century debate, see Rodrigo Amador de los Ríos, La Capilla de Villaviciosa en la Mezquita-Catedral de Córdoba, in: *Revista de España* 87 (1882), pp. 489–498.

18 The measurements given in this paragraph follow the specifications by Dionisio Ortiz Juarez, La cupula de la Capilla Real de la cathedral the Córdoba: posible obra almohade, in: *Boletín de la Asociación española de orientalistas* 18 (1982), p. 198.

19 Internal dimension of vault: 5,85 m (N-S) on 5,54 m (E-W), Ortiz Juarez 1982 (see note 18), p. 199.

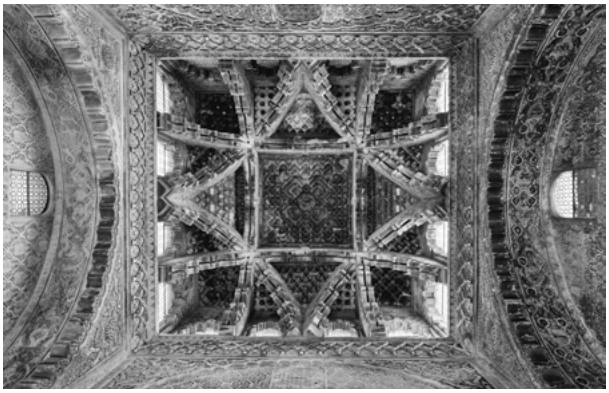


3 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of Southern façade.

rises a dome of 4,35 m in height, externally covered by a four-sided pavilion roof, which exceeds the height of the Capilla de Villaviciosa located to the West. Surprisingly, the dome of the Christian chapel emulates the very design of the Islamic rib vault of the adjacent Capilla de Villaviciosa, dating from the second half of the 10th century (Figs. 4 and 5). Here just like there, eight intersecting stone ribs start directly from the stone cornice, combining the different rib layouts of the three maqsura domes. Just like in the Capilla de Villaviciosa, the lighting of the chapel is effected by means of four polylobed window openings on each side, which originally were closed by stucco latticework. The difference in the respective effect of the neighbouring vaults is foremost caused by their diverging designs. The massive ribs of the Capilla de Villaviciosa are visible and the severies in between hollowed out by means of small-scale rib or melon domes, as well as scattered patterns. In contrast, the Capilla Real's semi-circular ribs and severies are overlaid with a continuous stucco decor, which used to be gilded and forms a polylobed arch contour as well as minute muqarnas surfaces.

Just like the dome, the wall zone below is coated in its upper section by a continuous originally polychromatic stucco decoration, characterized by a combination of floral ornamentation (*ataurique*), Arab inscriptions and coat of arms referring to the Crown of Cas-

4 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla de Villaviciosa, interior view of the Umayyad rib vault.



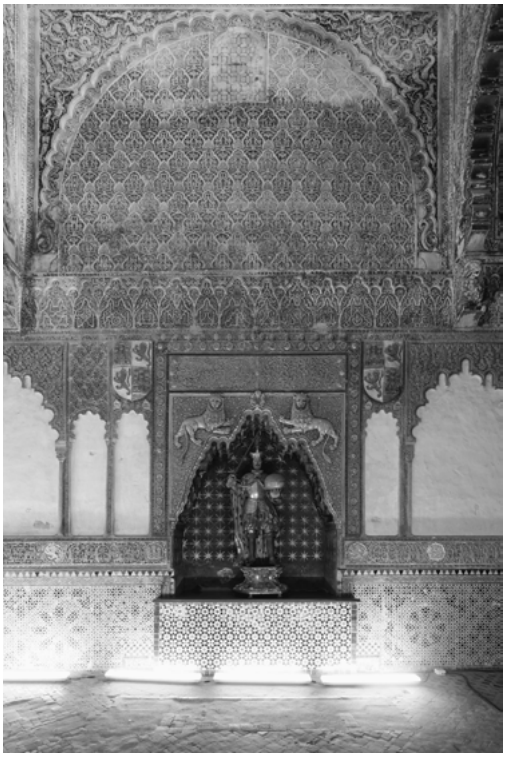
5 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of the Christian rib vault.

tile and León,[20] while the lower wall section or dado shows geometric tile mosaic (*alicatado*). Both, the stucco and tile work follow an Islamic vocabulary known from Nasrid architecture and thus dating to the 14th century.

The overlapping of different artistic traditions is especially apparent in these lower wall areas. While the narrow sides of the Capilla Real open towards the adjacent prayer hall in polylobed arches (Figs. 2 and 3), the central part of the Eastern wall is occupied by an elaborate muqarnas niche sheltering an 18th-century sculpture of Fernando III (Fig. 6, Plate XIII),[21] whereas the Western wall shows a dedicatory inscription preserved *in situ*, origi-

20 On the stucco decoration and its controversially discussed date and attribution, see María Angeles Jordano Barbudo, *La Sinagoga de Córdoba y las yeserías mudéjares en la Baja Edad Media*, Córdoba: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Córdoba, 2011, pp. 139–161.

21 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), p. 463.



6 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of Eastern façade.

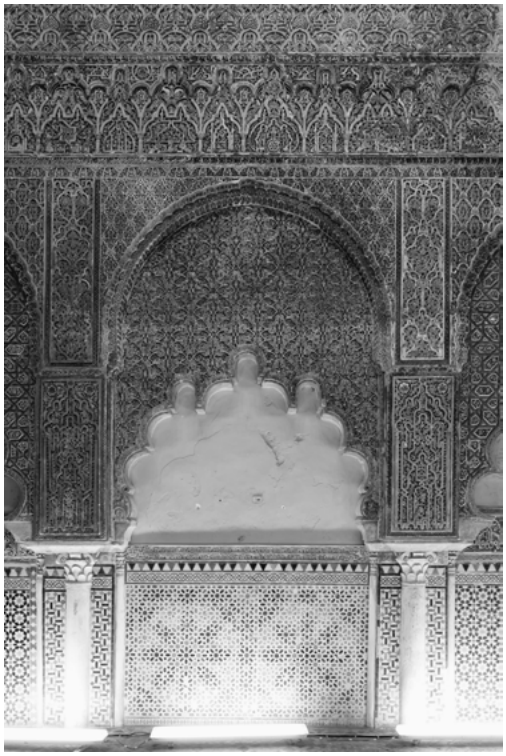
nally surrounded by a wall painting of a king – probably the donor – kneeling in front of Mary, which survives only by mention in a source dated 1617 (Fig. 7, Plate XIV).

The inscription in gothic letters gives us important indications regarding the commissioner of the royal chapel, the king buried within, as well as its dating:

> Este es el muy alto rey don Enrique por honra del cuerpo del rey su padre esta capiella mando fazer: Acabose en la era de M e CCCCIX ans.[22]

The inscription speaks of Castilian king Enrique II of Trastámara (r. 1369–1379), which translocated the remains of his father Alfonso XI (r. 1312–1350) from the cathedral of Seville to Córdoba in 1371, to inter him next to his father and Enrique's grandfather Fernando IV (r. 1295–1312), resting in Córdoba since 1312. This was the express wish of Alfonso. Having died of the plague in Gibraltar 1350, Enrique's father was first placed in

22 "This is the very high king don Enrique, [who] for the memory of the body of the king, his father, had let build this chapel: It was finished in the era of M and CCCCIX (1409) years." (English translation Christian Schweizer). The mentioned date corresponds to the year 1371 AD, due to the so-called *Aera Hispanica*, the Spanish Era, commencing 38 BC.



7 Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of Western façade.

the royal burial chapel of the nearer cathedral of Seville against his last will. The mortal remains of both kings were relocated on 8 August 1736 by Felipe V to the Cordobese collegiate church of San Hipólito (Real Colegiata de San Hipólito), where the furnishings of the royal endowment reached as well.[23]

At this point you might ask – what is there to discuss? A Castilian king honored the last will of his deceased father burying him in the cathedral of Córdoba. But it is not that simple. The cathedral of Córdoba used to be a mosque. And the royal burial chapel with its plentiful borrowings of Islamic architectural and decorative forms could as well be a structure dating from the time before Córdoba's reconquest, and therefore just reused by Enrique II, as argued by Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza in his 2001 article *La fachada luminosa de Al-Hakam II en la mezquita de Córdoba*. Picking up a 19th-century hypothesis, Ruiz Souza pleads for a caliphal origin of the chapel by presenting the reconstruction of three dome compartments at the entrance to al-Ḥakam's prayer hall extension – a hypothesis that is

23 Nieto Cumplido 2007 (see note 9), p. 466 (relocated accoutrements include chalices, phials, a cross made from jasper, wooden lecterns, missals).

however far from convincing.[24] Neither was Dionisio Ortiz Juarez able to present a conclusive argument for his theory of an Almohad origin, based on the stylistic analysis of the Capilla Real's muqarnas vault.[25] While Ruiz Souza likened the three dome construction to Ottonian westworks, Ortiz Juarez interpreted the raised structure as a *dikka*, a tribune from which the Koran is recited and prayers are intoned.

Burial Traditions in Christian Iberia

Two questions closely linked to Christian burial traditions in the Iberia Peninsula are crucial for understanding the Capilla Real of Córdoba. Firstly, why was the royal burial chapel conceived as a two-storied construction, and secondly, why was it placed right next to the Capilla de Villaviciosa?

As Isidro Bango Torviso has demonstrated in his seminal article from 1992, medieval burial traditions in Christian Spain witnessed a radical change in the 12th century. While sepulture within churches had formerly been prohibited by the council of Braga of 561, a gradual conquest of the church's interior now took place, whereby the presbytery was attributed particular importance.[26] This trend goes hand in hand with a general tendency to separate and mark privileged burial chapels within the church, as witnessed from the 13th century onwards in the cathedrals of Seville, Toledo, and Córdoba, where the royal chapels were constructed *ex novo* in privileged locations, in immediate proximity to the presbytery.[27]

The earliest of these constructions was built under Alfonso X (r. 1252–1284), who commissioned a royal burial chapel for his father Fernando III (r. 1217–1252) – deceased in 1252 – and his mother Beatriz de Suabia – who died already in 1235 – in the cathedral of Seville (former Almohad mosque). According to Ruiz Souza, this was the first privatization of an area in a cathedral through the construction of a burial chapel in its most important sector.[28] At the same time, Alfonso's commission established a new tradition, in which the

24 Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, La fachada luminosa de Al-Hakam II en la Mezquita de Córdoba. Hipótesis para el debate, in: *Madrider Mitteilungen* 42 (2001), pp. 432–445. The hypothesis of three domed compartments at the entrance to al-Ḥakam's prayer hall extension has already been contested by Amador de los Ríos 1882 (see note 17), pp. 498, 511, 517–518, where he interprets the Capilla de Villaviciosa as a gothic chapel, while talking of an entirely Mudéjar work in the case of the adjacent Capilla Real, "la otra capilla es mudejár toda ella", p. 519.

25 Ortiz Juarez 1982 (see note 18).

26 Isidoro G. Bango Torviso, El espacio para enterramientos privilegiados en la arquitectura medieval española, in: *Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte* 4 (1992), pp. 106, 117–119.

27 Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Capillas Reales funerarias catedralicias de Castilla y León. Nuevas hipótesis interpretativas de las catedrales de Sevilla, Córdoba y Toledo, in: *Anuario de Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte (U.A.M.)* 18 (2006), pp. 9–29.

28 Ruiz Souza 2006 (see note 27), p. 10.

royal funerals would not take place in monasteries like *Santa María la Real de las Huelgas* in Burgos any more, but in areas within cathedrals, built especially for this purpose. [29]

Regrettably, Fernando's Sevilian burial chapel, with its major importance for typology and formal evolution, was destroyed during the gothic reconstruction of the cathedral started in 1401. Written sources, nevertheless, help clarify at least some aspects of its location and general layout. According to a description by Espinosa de los Monteros from 1635, the chapel was located in the Eastern part of the cathedral, close to the former minaret and thus right next to the presbytery.[30] And just as the Cordobese example, this royal chapel was erected over a vaulted substructure, resulting in a two-storied layout.[31]

These two aspects – proximity to the presbytery and two-storied construction of the chapel – became mandatory for the kings of Castile and León until the beginning of the 15th century, together with the relocation of the royal burial grounds from the monastery to newly built chapels in the cathedral – as testified by the royal burial chapels of Sancho IV (r. 1284–1295) in Toledo and Pedro I (r. 1350–1369) in Seville (since destroyed), as well as the chapels built under Enrique II in Córdoba and Toledo.[32]

Closest to the Cordobese solution is the royal burial chapel in Toledo's cathedral built under Sancho IV in the late 13th century. In this burial chapel recorded as *Capilla de Santa Cruz*, Sancho IV was himself interred with the highly revered Alfonso VII (r. 1126–1157), already buried in the Toledan cathedral. For this endeavor he 'privatized' the Eastern part of the presbytery, similar to the case of Córdoba with its royal burial chapel having been built eastward from the Capilla de Villaviciosa, which was being used as presbytery.

The fact that neither Sancho IV nor Enrique II were buried in Seville like their predecessors Fernando III and Alfonso X must be more than a mere coincidence. Both were rather controversial and had to legitimize their rule: Sancho IV against Alfonso de la Cerda, the son and designated successor of his deceased brother Fernando, and Enrique II because of murdering his half-brother Pedro I. This seems to be a plausible reason for their distancing themselves from Seville. At the same time, however, both kings were very concerned about marking themselves out by commissions, especially burial chapels to famous ancestors. Gutierrez Baños has demonstrated this fact for Sancho IV, based on his commissions in the cathedrals of Seville and Toledo, as well as the monasteries of Oña and Sahagún, and Ruiz Souza for Enrique II in reference to his commission in Córdoba.[33] If we therefore

29 On the function of Las Huelgas as royal pantheon of the Crown of Castile and León, see Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras, El "çementerio real" de Alfonso VIII en Las Huelgas de Burgos, in: *SEMATA. Ciencias Sociales e Humanidades* 10 (1998), pp. 77–109.

30 Ruiz Souza 2006 (see note 27), p. 12.

31 Teresa Laguna Paúl, La capilla de los Reyes de la primitiva Catedral Santa María de Sevilla y las relaciones de la Corona castellana con el cabildo hispalense en su etapa fundacional (1248–1285), in: Isidro G. Bango Torviso (ed.), *Maravillas de la España medieval. Tesoro sagrado y monarquía*, 2 vols., Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2001, vol. 1, p. 244.

32 Ruiz Souza 2006 (see note 27), p. 15.

33 Fernando Gutiérrez Baños, *Las empresas artísticas de Sancho IV el Bravo*, Burgos: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997. Ruiz Souza 2006 (see note 27), pp. 15–18, 24.

assume, that Enrique II tried to legitimize his contested rule by a propagandistic building program, why then should he have chosen an Islamic vocabulary for his newly constructed burial chapels in Córdoba and Toledo instead of a gothic one?

The Iberian Court Architecture of the 14th century – a Common Artistic Legacy

To understand this apparently paradox fact, we must refer to the contemporary court architecture in Christian Castile and Nasrid Granada.[34] Having a look at the palace complexes in Tordesillas (todays Royal Convent of Santa Clara) and Seville remodelled and/or enlarged by Pedro I in the 1360s, we take note of exactly this same aesthetic.[35] Both buildings are prominent examples of the so-called Mudéjar style,[36] which had become fashionable among

34 For various years Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza has been working intensively on the artistic exchange between the Crown of Castile and León and al-Andalus, see, for instance, Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, *Estudios y reflexiones sobre la arquitectura de la Corona de Castilla y Reino de Granada en el siglo XIV creatividad y/o crisis*, PhD thesis, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2000; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Castilla y Al-Andalus. Arquitecturas aljamiadas y otros grados de asimilación, in: *Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte* 16 (2004), pp. 17–43; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Castilla y la libertad de las artes en el siglo XV. La aceptación de la herencia de Al-Andalus. De la realidad material a los fundamentos teóricos, in: *Anales de historia del arte*, Extra 1 (2012), pp. 123–161; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Antigüedad e historicismos en la España medieval. El Real Alcázar de Sevilla y la Alhambra de Granada, in: Sandro de Maria and Manuel Parada López de Corselas (eds.), *El Imperio y las Hispanias de Trajano a Carlos V. Clasicismo y poder en el arte español*, Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2014, pp. 439–454.

35 On Pedro's building activities in Tordesillas and Seville, see Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Santa Clara de Tordesillas. Nuevos datos para su cronología y estudio. Relación entre Muhammad V y Pedro I, in: *Reales Sitios. Revista del Patrimonio Nacional* 130 (1996), pp. 32–40; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Santa Clara de Tordesillas. Restos de dos palacios medievales contrapuestos (siglos XIII–XIV), in: *Proceedings of the V Congreso de Arqueología Medieval Española from March 22 to 27 1999*, 2 vols., Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 2001, vol. 2, pp. 851–860; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Santa Clara de Tordesillas, in: *Los Reales Sitios* 6 (2005), pp. 19–27; Antonio Almagro, El Palacio de Pedro I en Tordesillas: realidad e hipótesis, in: *Reales Sitios. Revista del Patrimonio Nacional* 163 (2005), pp. 2–13; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Al-Andalus y Cultura Visual. Santa María la Real de las Huelgas y Santa Clara de Tordesillas. Dos hitos en la asimilación de al-Andalus en la reinteriorización de la Corona de Castilla, in: Manuel Valdés Fernández (ed.), *El legado de Al-Andalus. El arte andalusí en los reinos de León y Castilla durante la Edad Media. Proceedings of the XI Simposio El Legado de al-Andalus from November 29 to December 1 2006*, Valladolid: Fundación del Patrimonio Histórico de Castilla y León, 2007, pp. 205–242; Rafael Cómez, *El alcázar del rey don Pedro*, 2nd edition, Seville: Diputación Provincial de Sevilla, 2006; Rafael Cómez Ramos, El Alcázar del rey Pedro I de Castilla en Sevilla como espacio intercultural en el contexto de la arquitectura mudéjar de su tiempo, in: *Mitteilungen der Carl Justi-Vereinigung* 20 (2008), pp. 48–64; Concepción Rodríguez Moreno, *El palacio de Pedro I en los Reales Alcázares de Sevilla. Estudio y análisis*, PhD thesis, Universidad de Granada, 2012.

36 The much-debated term *mudéjar* was introduced into art historiography in 1859 by the Spanish historian and archaeologist José Amador de los Ríos (1818–1878) in his inaugural lecture at the *Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando*, see José Amador de los Ríos, *El estilo mudejar en arquitectura*, Madrid: Real Academia de Nobles Artes de San Fernando, 1859. Unlike other art historical terms, Mudéjar was first used in relation to historic sciences, denoting a group of population, the so-called *mudejares* (Muslims living in Christian Iberia). Thus, the term does not essentially come from the architecture, but from the craftsmen, who have constructed the buildings. In the face of Spain's multi-confessional and multi-ethnical heterogeneity, the term Mudéjar is stretched to its limits. In most cases, Islamic craftsmen can be attested,

royal patrons, despite or perhaps precisely because of its combination of Christian and Islamic architectural and decorative forms. This entanglement complicates the attribution of Mudéjar architecture and similar cultural phenomena. In the case of the Capilla Real of Córdoba, the complex and multi-layered history of the building makes it even more difficult. In the very place of one of the most important mosques of the Islamic Middle Ages – which has been reused as a cathedral since 1236 – Enrique II commissioned a royal burial chapel, which follows the Christian type of sepulchral monument introduced in Seville one century earlier, overlaid with an interior decor that shows strong Islamic influence. This fusion of diverse artistic traditions leads to the question on whether we are dealing here with three distinguishable architectural repertories – the Hispano-Islamic, the Gothic and the Mudéjar – or rather a common artistic language, as argued by Francisco Enríquez y Ferrer in his 1859 inaugural lecture at the *Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando*.[37] According to Enríquez y Ferrer, the 'infiltration' of Islamic culture in the reconquered territories, resulted in a strong influence on Christian customs, science and arts, as can be observed not only in the Cordobese chapel, but also at the so-called vestibule in Tordesillas (Fig. 8, Plate XV) and the Ambassador's Hall of the Alcázar in Seville. Through the juxtaposition of Christian wall painting and Islamic stucco decoration they anticipate the aesthetic program of the Capilla Real.[38] The close relation between Enrique's burial chapel and the Iberian court architecture of the 14th century is further strengthened, if we take into consideration the Arab inscriptions documented in the Seville Alcázar and Córdoba's royal chapel. As Julie Marquer has shown in her contributions from 2012 and 2013,[39] the epigraphic program of Pedro's palace has been elaborated to support the visualisation of royal power, which Antonio Almagro and Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza could also detect in the

but their colleagues were Christians, which can easily be traced in stylistic overlapping of Christian and Islamic decorative forms. For a general introduction to Mudéjar architecture, see Gonzalo Borrás Gualis, *El arte Mudéjar*, Teruel: Instituto de Estudios Turolenses, 1990; Rafael López Guzmán, *Arquitectura Mudéjar*, 3rd edition, Madrid: Cátedra, 2016. On the mentioned controversy, see for instance Cynthia Robinson and Leyla Rouhi (eds.), *Under the influence. Questioning the Comparative in Medieval Castile*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005; Silvia García Alcázar, Mudejarismos y romanticismo. Orígenes del concepto de arte mudéjar, in: *XI Simposio Internacional de Mudejarismo. Teruel, 18–20 de septiembre de 2008*, Teruel: Centro de Estudios Mudéjares, 2009, pp. 439–450.

37 Francisco Enríquez y Ferrer, *Originalidad de la arquitectura árabe*, Madrid: Real Academia de Nobles Artes de San Fernando, 1859, pp. 205–207. See also Nieves Panadero Peropadre, *Los estilos medievales en la arquitectura madrileña del siglo XIX (1780–1868)*, PhD thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2002, pp. 445–446.

38 Further wall paintings within the Capilla de Villaviciosa have been recognized by Teresa Laguna Paúl, who interprets them as an ancestral portrait gallery comparable to the one preserved within the Ambassador's Hall in the Alcázar of Seville, see Teresa Laguna Paúl, Dos fragmentos en busca de autor y una fecha equívoca. Alonso Martínez, pintor en Córdoba a mediados del siglo XIV, y las pinturas de la capilla de Villaviciosa, in: *Laboratorio de Arte. Revista del Departamento de Historia del Arte* 18 (2005), pp. 73–88. I would like to thank Carmen Rallo Gruss for pointing this out to me.

39 Julie Marquer, Epigrafía y poder. El uso de las inscripciones árabes en el proyecto propagandístico de Pedro I de Castilla (1350–1369), in: *e-Spania* (13 June 2012). https://e-spania.revues.org/21058 (28.01.2017); Julie Marquer, El poder escrito. Problemáticas y significación de las inscripciones árabes de los palacios de Pedro I de Castilla (1350–1369), in: *Anales de Historia del Arte* 23 (2013), pp. 499–508.

8 Tordesilla, Royal Convent of Santa Clara (former palace), interior view of vestibule.

overall architectural concept of the building.[40] In both cases, the main point of reference was Nasrid Granada, which not only provided many of the architectural and decorative models, but was also relevant for the Arab inscriptions, as Pedro even recurred to the sultanic titulature ʿizz li-mawlānā l-sulṭān (glory to our Lord the Sultan), used by Yūsuf I (r. AH 733-755/AD 1333–1354) and Muḥammad V (r. AH 755-760/763-793/AD 1354–1359/1360–1362) in the Alhambra palaces.[41] Surprisingly, the Cordobese royal chapel being situated within a Christian cathedral, shows Islamic epigraphy too. Currently studied by Rouhollah Amanimehr within the research project mentioned at the beginning, we see a

40 Antonio Almagro Gorbea, Los palacios de Pedro I. La arquitectura al servicio del poder, in: *Anales de historia del arte* Extra 2 (2013), pp. 25–49. Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Los espacios palatinos del rey en las cortes de Castilla y Granada. Los mensajes más allá de las formas, in: *Anales de Historia del Arte* 23 (2013), pp. 305–331; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, «Oh lugar en que se manifiesta el rey heroico». Castilla, Granada y la cultura visual del poder en la Génesis del Estado Moderno, in: Víctor Mínguez Cornelles (ed.), *Las artes y la arquitectura del poder,* Castelló de la Plana: Universitat Jaume I, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2013, pp. 775–794; Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, El rey y sus espacios en palacio en la Corona de Castilla y León en la Baja Edad Media, in: Begoña Alonso Ruiz and Fernando Villaseñor Sebastián (eds.), *Arquitectura tardogótica en la Corona de Castilla: trayectorias e intercambios*, Santander and Seville: Universidad de Cantabria, Universidad de Sevilla, 2014, pp. 35–53.

similar program – though on a much lower technical level – with the recurrent motives of *al-yumn* (good fortune), *al-baraka* (blessing) and *lā ġālib illāllāh* (there is no victor but God), known from the Alhambra, as well as Pedro's palace in Seville.[42] Thus, the deliberate use of Arab inscriptions by Pedro I and Enrique de Trastámara shows on the one hand, that Nasrid Granada and the Crown of Castile and León had a common court culture, "una cultura cortesana común", while on the other hand, its appropriation must be seen as a strategy of political and cultural domination.[43]

A Codified Language of Signs and Symbols

The Capilla Real of Córdoba discussed in these lines, bears witness of a transcultural reality, which influenced not only Iberian palace architecture, but also penetrated in the religious realm through royal commissions within cathedrals. As has been shown by comparing the royal burial chapel of Córdoba with related examples from Seville and Toledo, the architectural layout follows the Christian tradition, while the decorative and epigraphic program is strongly influenced by contemporary Iberian court architecture, which can be characterized as an amalgam of diverse artistic languages. Thus, the entangled history of medieval Iberia leads to what we may call an *entangled architecture*. By using a codified language of signs and symbols, based on visual codes, which point to the crown of Castile and León (castles and lions) *and* Nasrid Granada (vegetal and geometric ornamentation, epigraphy, muqarnas), the royal chapel of Córdoba stands for a common artistic legacy – charged with new meaning.

41 Marquer 2013 (see note 39), p. 506. For the mentioned Nasrid inscriptions, see José Miguel Puertas Vílchez, *Leer la Alhambra. Guía visual del monumento a través de sus inscripciones*, Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, 2010, pp. 57, 127.

42 I would like to thank Rouhollah Amanimehr for sharing his preliminary results with me, as well as Johannes Thomann for his revision of the transcription.

43 Marquer 2013 (see note 39), p. 506.

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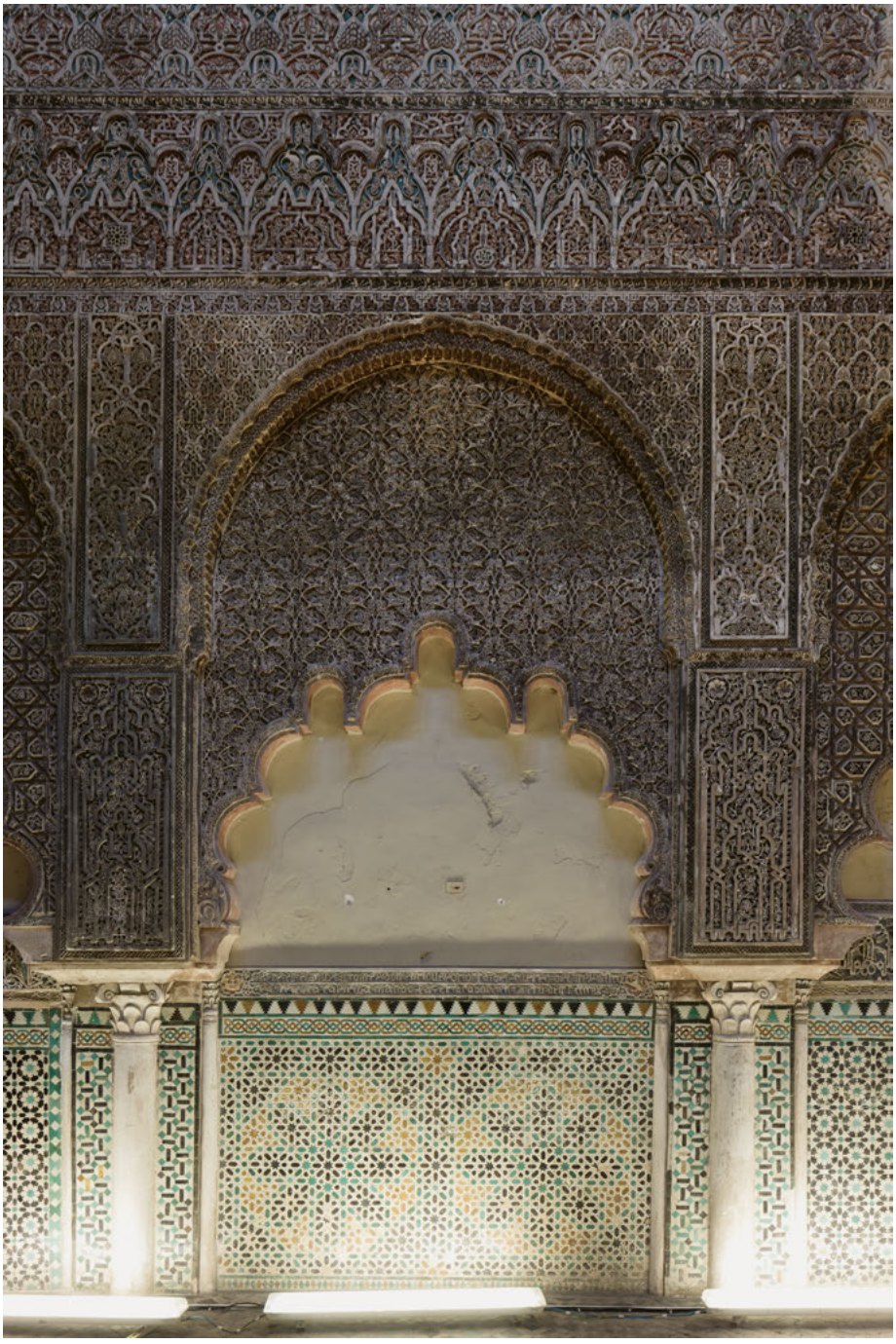
PLATES
TAFELN

XII Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of Sothern façade.

XIII Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of Eastern façade.



XIV Córdoba, Mosque-Cathedral, Capilla Real, interior view of Western façade.

XV Tordesilla, Royal Convent of Santa Clara (former palace), interior view of vestibule.